**TEXTS IN TIME**

throughout time, texts have **both reflected and challenged the values of their times as well as the personal contexts of their composers.** Elizabeth Barret Browning, through her poems "Sonnets fron the Potruguese"**, composed in the Victorian period of the 1850s,**  examines love which is idealised and spiritual but is based on real life experiences, **through the medium of the tight controls of the Petrarchan sonnet form, traditionally a male expression of courtly love**. The Great Gatsby, **a novel** written by F Scott Fitzgerald, is also about a perception of **love but one that is** corrupted heavily by the **failure of the** American dream **in the 1920s**. **Like the sonnets,** the novel is a love story, **but is** a tale of Gatsby's obsessive and ultimately destructive desire for a woman he has lost to the past. **Fitzgerald uses lyrical prose and a filtering device of a narrator-novelist Nick Carraway.**

Browning **portrays a love based on authenticity through** shared intimacy, acceptance and trust. Wooed by **the poet Robert Browning,** four years her junior, herself a reclusive invalid, **Barrett’s** poems were intensely personal and private reflections about love. **While raised by** a restrictive father who did not allow marriage, **Barrett received a thorough classical education and was a respected poet. Victorian attitudes tended to repress open emotional** expression and sexuality. **While courtly love was idealised, marriage could also be a pragmatic matter of social and economic advancement, necessary when women’s legal rights in property and marriage were restricted.** Brownings poetry **both reflects expected courtship rituals but also challenged Victorian attitudes towards** women, courtship and love relationships.  
  
Relationhips have needed a base of Authentic love which allows the relationhip to grow into a strong emotional bond. Browning shows the need for this in sonnet XIV. In this sonnet Browning tells her lover that love cannot be based on the superficial or the changable but love her for "loves sake" so she can be sure that the relationship will last. Browning ironicall refers to courting convetions common in victorian time by putting the words in man's mouth: " do not love say/ i love her for her smile... for a trick of thought/ that falls in well with mine." these reasons for love seem to superficial and, because of the strong possiblity of change, are the demise in a relationship. browning stresses this and thus pleads for a base of love authentic love as it is critical for a lasting relationship. **This paragraph is a jumble and I am not going to try and rework it now. 2 points: what aspect of love is highlighted or evident in this poem? You don’t say. And, you have to include technical poetic terminology attached to each quote you use. There are not any of those.**  
  
F. Sott Fitzgerald shows how true authentic love **was very difficult in the 1920s world portrayed in his novel.**  The social norms of America after WWI were very diffrent to the practices of Brownings's Victorian era: it was a time of great prosperity and the age of prohibition; "bootleggers" such as Jay Gatsby made fortunes **but were despised by the ‘old money’ classes represented by Tom Buchanan**. Fitzgerald portrays the shallowness, hypocrisy and greed of the **1920s** "Jazz Age" and the “lost generation’s” **hedonism and lack of spiritual values in America after the catastrophic destruction of** World War 1. Fitzgerald’s **own courtship of the wealthy socialite Zelda, and his subsequent attempts to sustain an extravagant celebrity lifestyle in New York and financial difficulties, has parallels in the story of Jay Gatsby.**

The type of love expressed in "The Great Gatsby' is in stark contrast to the authentic love showed in Brownings peotry. The marriage between Tom and Daisy Buchanan symbolises the impossibility of autheentic love when gree, selfishness and infidelity predominate."Enourmously wealthy" TOm represents "old" money with privilege and inbred superiority. His brutal and self-serving attitude to love is shown in his treatment to Myrtle- breaking her nose whe she dared claim the same status as Daisy, and by his careless infidelity:"I go off on a spree... but i always come back". Daisy revealed to be an unworthy object of Gatsby's devotion, as she sacrifices real love for luxuries and status of wealth bestowed by Toms "old" money, not that of the "bootlegger" "Mr Nobody from Nowhere". as TOm scornfully calls Gatsby. Daisy cries when Gatsby "began throwing" his luxurious shirts saying "It makes me sad beacause ove never seen such bueatiful shirts before", but she weeps not for thier lost love put the display of wealth. Fitsgerald makes a bitter irony as Tom and Daisy are the only relationship that survives in the novel. Through nick, Fitzgerald makes a scathing coment on thier superficial love: "THey were careless people... they smashed up things they created and then retreated back into thier money.. and let other people clean up the mess they had made **This is a good point to make. As it is, it is jumbled and too long. The response as written refers to just one poem and does not address the nature of Gatsby’s love. It also does not address the different types of love and compare them across the 2 texts. It seems to me you are not real clear yourself on this – you do need to be strong and clear in your own mind.**   
  
In conclusion, ELizabeth Barret Browning, through her peoms "Sonnets of the Portugues" shows examples of an idealised authentic love which is based on strong real life experiences. F.Scott Fitzgerald however, expresses an idealised love that is corrupted heavily by the American Dream. Both these texts show how established values and contexts of times are portrayed by composeres who live in them.

**This is 950 words. Know what you can write in 40 minutes so you can plan accordingly – 700, 800, whatever. I suspect the context material will have to be edited back to allow more text evidence. Just as important, you need a clearer structure based on various types of love – that is not coming through.**

**If you rework this and post, I will continue to work with you on it. Mr W**